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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY



CALIFORNIA
ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

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San Francisco's Natural Treasures

San Francisco is renowned for its great parks, which are wonderful places for birding and other recreation. We are fortunate to have so much access to urban recreation areas. The City of San Francisco manages 230 parks that total 3,500 acres. Natural areas—remnants of San Francisco's historic landscape—are found in 27 percent of city parks.

The Natural Areas Program (NAP), part of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department (RPD), was started in 1997. With a small staff and a shoestring budget, the NAP manages a large portion of San Francisco parks, which serves as important habitat and is enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Each year volunteers, including Golden Gate Audubon members, contribute thousands of hours to restore natural areas. About a fourth of all the park's volunteers participate, providing 13,000 hours of free labor. Golden Gate Audubon works with the NAP around the city to preserve and restore natural areas.

Unfortunately, our parks have not had the funds necessary to maintain and improve natural areas. The NAP in particular operates with only seven of RPD's 299 gardeners and a mere 2 percent of the department's overall budget. San Francisco spends only about \$1,000 per acre on protecting and restoring natural areas. By comparison, Chicago spends \$4,500 per acre.

NATURAL TREASURES continued on page 3



Lee Karney

Western Snowy Plover at Crissy Field, one of the endangered species at the GGNRA.

GGNRA Endangered Species Big Year Launches in 2008

Did you know that the Golden Gate National Recreation Area contains more federally protected endangered species than Yosemite, Yellowstone, Kings Canyon, and Sequoia national parks combined?

On January 6, 2008, at the San Francisco Zoo, Golden Gate Audubon, the Sierra Club's Wildlife and Endangered Species Committee, and other organizations will kick off an exciting campaign to reconnect people with the superlative resources of this great urban national park: the 2008 GGNRA Endangered Species Big Year.

The Endangered Species Big Year is a race against time to see—and save—each of the 33 listed species found within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Throughout 2008, participants will be encouraged to attend guided expeditions to see the park's rarest species and then to take 33 specific conservation actions that will help these imperiled species recover.

The Endangered Species Big Year is a competitive event: participants who see and help the most endangered species by the end of 2008 will win the Endangered Species Big Year. Each sighting must occur while you are within the GGNRA's legislative boundary, but the conservation action items may take you to different places around the Bay Area—sometimes even your congressional representative's office!

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Society Supporting Membership is \$25 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets the last Monday of every month (except August and December) at 7:30 p.m. in the chapter office in Berkeley.

The Gull is published nine times per year by the Golden Gate Audubon Society. The deadline for submissions is five weeks prior to the month of publication. Special third-class postage paid in Oakland, CA. Send address changes to office promptly. The post office does not forward *The Gull*.

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Design and layout e.g. communications

BIG YEAR from page 1

You can sign up for the Endangered Species Big Year at www.ggnrabisyear.org and download a checklist of the 33 species and each species' corresponding action item. There are 66 Endangered Species Big Year activities to complete, but you can do as many or as few as you like. Come out for one trip or one conservation action item, or try and do them all over the course of 2008.

At the January 6 kick-off celebration, we'll have on hand two Endangered Species Act success stories: the recovered Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. We'll also have a San Francisco Garter Snake on display. The world's most beautiful serpent is still found within the GGNRA, but needs our help if we hope to have it around for future generations to enjoy. After a short presentation and some snacks, we'll take participants on their first guided expedition of the Big Year: we'll walk across the street and hike north on Ocean Beach until we see the threatened Western Snowy Plover.

Over two dozen other trips to see endangered species within the GGNRA are already scheduled for the Endangered Species Big Year. You are also encouraged to explore the park on your own, and the Big Year website can help you understand where the species are most likely to be found, as well as help you learn more about the mission of this urban national park, the importance of the Endangered Species Act, and the complex legislative boundary of the GGNRA.

The GGNRA's astounding array of imperiled biodiversity—in the midst of the Bay Area's vibrant civilization—is certainly cause for celebration, but it is also cause for concern and action. Come out and take part in the 2008 GGNRA Endangered Species Big Year, get to know your imperiled neighbors, and help them recover.

by Brent Plater, Director, GGNRA Endangered Species Big Year

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Sign up for the Endangered Species Big Year at www.ggnrabisyear.org. For more information, contact Brent Plater at bplater@ggnrabisyear.org or 415.572.6989.

Come to the free Big Year kick-off on January 6, 1 p.m., at the San Francisco Zoo, 1 Zoo Road, San Francisco. For directions and a map, go to www.sfbzoo.org.

Watch upcoming issues of *The Gull* for announcements of Big Year field trips and events sponsored by Golden Gate Audubon.

Golden Gate Audubon Expands Volunteer and Member Staff

To serve our growing volunteer and restoration program activities, Golden Gate Audubon has hired a new part-time volunteer coordinator, Jennifer Robinson. Jennifer now manages our volunteer programs and works with staff and committees to implement our many restoration projects. With a BS in environmental science and sociology from Carroll College in Wisconsin, Jennifer brings an impressive background in the environmental field and strong experience working with volunteers. She works part-time with the East Bay Regional Parks District, the Sonoma Overlook Trail, and the Watershed Project. Jennifer also served as a contract biological technician with the Presidio Trust, a position that included monitoring California Quail in the Presidio.

Michael Martin, former volunteer and membership development coordinator, has moved into a new position as development manager. He manages our membership base, develops membership communications, and lends critical support to our fundraising efforts.

We welcome Jennifer to Golden Gate Audubon and thank Michael for his dedicated work over the past year.

Altamont Pass Update

Significantly reducing illegal bird kills at the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area (APWRA) is one of Golden Gate Audubon's top conservation priorities. Since settling our lawsuit with the wind companies and Alameda County in January 2007, Golden Gate Audubon has been working closely with the companies and the county to implement the terms of our settlement agreement, which committed the companies to reducing raptor mortality by 50 percent by November 2009 and crafting a comprehensive conservation plan to support both wind energy and bird conservation at Altamont over the long term.

In September, the members of the county's Scientific Review Committee (SRC) stated that they did not believe that the companies were currently on track to reduce mortality by half. The SRC's analysis indicates negligible or no change in mortality since September 2005. The SRC has unanimously recommended that the wind power companies shut down their operations for four months, from November 1, 2007, until February 28, 2008, as the best chance to reduce raptor mortality in the APWRA and move toward the required 50 percent reduction in the mortality of the four target raptor species (American Kestrels, Golden Eagles, Red-tail Hawks, and Burrowing Owls). The SRC's recommendation is based on the best available science, which indicates that a four-month winter shutdown could reduce raptor mortality by as much as 25 percent. A strategy originally suggested by some Altamont wind operators, the four-month seasonal shutdown is projected to have the least

economic impact on the companies, as only about 15 percent of the industry's energy is produced during this low-wind period, while maximally reducing avian mortality during a high raptor and migratory bird presence in the Diablo Hills.

Unfortunately, the wind companies have proposed to shut down the wind turbines for only two months, starting in November, and to work with the SRC to hand-pick some high-risk turbines for permanent removal and relocation. Golden Gate Audubon is concerned that the companies have chosen not to follow the best available science to reduce bird kill. We are additionally concerned that the companies have failed to remove the highest-risk turbines as outlined in the settlement agreement. Following the terms of our settlement agreement, and joined by Californians for Renewable Energy and Alameda County, Golden Gate Audubon has filed a request for mediation. We anticipate that this mediation will lead to stronger protections for the birds at Altamont. If the companies fail to achieve the 50 percent reduction by November 2009, they will be subject to the SRC's adaptive management plan to meet this goal.

In the meantime, we continue to work with all the parties to develop a long-term conservation plan that will achieve significant reductions in bird mortality while facilitating continued wind production at the Altamont. Golden Gate Audubon is committed to working with the county and the companies to achieve the conservation program outlined in our settlement agreement.

by Eli Saddler, Conservation Director

NATURAL TREASURES from page 1

Although San Francisco prides itself on being environmentally friendly, the city has not provided the levels of funding needed to preserve the natural areas in the city—areas that are also of economic value, since they provide native habitats that sustain urban wildlife and support recreational activities, including San Francisco's portion of the multibillion dollar birding industry.

Golden Gate Audubon has played a critical role in the creation and implementation of the Natural Areas Program. We believe that the NAP deserves the resources necessary to carry out the program successfully and funding comparable with other recreational activities in our parks. Fortunately, San Francisco's natural areas may be getting some help. Since September, the environmental community has been working hard to get more funding for trails and restoration in natural areas through the upcoming general obligation bond measure on the

February 2008 ballot. When originally proposed, the \$185 million bond measure dedicated to capital improvements in city parks included no money for the Natural Areas Program. However, thanks to the leadership of Golden Gate Audubon and other environmental groups, the bond now earmarks \$5 million for capital projects within natural areas.

Golden Gate Audubon is encouraged by this positive step, but remains concerned that more needs to be done. We would like to lend our public support to the February 2008 San Francisco Parks Bond Measure, but without an increase in the annual operating budget for the Natural Areas Program, the program may lack the resources to implement the capital improvements funded by the bond measure. As this issue of *The Gull* goes to press, Golden Gate Audubon is asking the City of San Francisco to increase the NAP's annual budget

so that more gardeners can be hired and the NAP can expand its public education and outreach. We hope that if San Francisco increases the annual NAP budget, Golden Gate Audubon can publicly support the bond measure.

by Eli Saddler, Conservation Director

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We need your help to secure adequate funding for our natural areas and the recreational opportunities enjoyed by so many birders, hikers, and others. Contact the mayor and board of supervisors today and tell them that you want more funding for the NAP before you vote for the bond measure, so there will be enough gardeners to do the capital projects funded by the bond.

Contact Mayor Gavin Newsom at 415.554.6141, 415.554.6160 (fax), or gavin.newsom@sfgov.org. Contact the board of supervisors at 415.554.5184, 415.554.5163 (fax), or board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org.

Golden Gate Audubon Celebrates 90 Years



Amelia Wilson (left), recipient of an Elsie Roemer Conservation Award, and Elizabeth Murdock, Golden Gate Audubon executive director.



Marjorie Blackwell, president of the Golden Gate Audubon board of directors, welcomes guests.

More than 200 members, supporters, and friends celebrated Golden Gate Audubon's 90th anniversary in grand style on October 11. The event at Port of San Francisco headquarters on Pier One in San Francisco was a great success and raised roughly \$40,000 for Golden Gate Audubon's conservation and education programs.

Guests were greeted by a stunning display of important events in Golden Gate Audubon's history and a map illustrating the conservation areas we have helped save over the years. While enjoying hors d'oeuvres and wine and meeting friends, guests submitted their bids on silent auction items including certificates to gourmet restaurants, beautiful artwork, and vacation getaways.

Wendy Pulling, director of environmental policy at PG&E, presented awards to four outstanding individuals. Whitney Dotson of the North Richmond Open Space Alliance and Amelia Wilson of Save Open Space—Gateway Valley were given Golden Gate Audubon's Elsie Roemer Conservation Awards for their dedication to the preservation of the environment. Arlene Rodriguez, environment program officer at the San Francisco Foundation, and Lisa Wayne, director of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department's Natural Areas Program, received the first-ever Golden Gull Community Leadership Awards for their

commitment to helping advance Golden Gate Audubon's mission of engaging Bay Area communities in protecting local wildlife and habitats.

A spirited live auction, led by Golden Gate Audubon board member Phil Price, capped the evening.

The generous sponsors of the event were PG&E, Crocodile Bay Resort, Jay and Lisa Pierrepont, the Port of San Francisco, Jacqui Smalley and John Austin, and Starbucks Coffee. We are also indebted to local restaurants Quince and A16 and to Lava Lake Ranch for the delicious food, to Saints-bury Vineyard and George Peyton of Rosenblum Cellars for the fine wines, and to Anchor Brewery for beer.

Planning this event, the largest ever undertaken by Golden Gate Audubon, was a yearlong effort by committee of volunteers and staff.

Thanks go to Michael Martin and Elizabeth McNamee, committee co-chairs; Marj Blackwell, Beth Slatkin, and Jacqui Smalley, who organized the silent auction; Miles McKey, Elizabeth Murdock, Elizabeth McNamee, Dan Murphy, and John Bowers, members of the awards selection subcommittee; Judith Dunham, who researched and helped produce the history display; Karen Eller and Lori Higa, planning participants; and Marika Holmgren, consultant. Additional thanks go to all of our staff and board members for helping to pull the event together.



GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON

Charles Denson



Whitney Dotson of the North Richmond Open Space Alliance with his Elsie Roemer Conservation Award.

Judith Dunham



George Peyton (left), longtime Golden Gate Audubon field trip leader, and Glenn Olson, executive director of Audubon California, toasting GGA's 90 years.

Charles Denson



Guests perusing some of the many items in the silent auction.

Charles Denson



Arlene Rodriguez (right), recipient of a Golden Gull Community Leadership Award, with Kevin Consey, of the Golden Gate Audubon board of directors, and Susan Consey.

Charles Denson



Lisa Wayne displaying her Golden Gull Community Leadership Award.

Charles Denson



Guests looking at photographs by Eleanor Briccetti, part of the silent auction.



For questions about individual field trips, contact the leaders. If you cannot reach a leader, contact Pam Belchamber at 510.549.2839. Field trips are also listed on the Golden Gate Audubon website at www.goldengateaudubon.org.

San Francisco Botanical Gardens

Saturday, December 1, 10 a.m. – noon

Angie Geiger and Nancy DeStefanis, SF Nature Education; Darin Dawson, SF Botanical Garden Docent, 415.387.9160, www.sfnature.org

Meet at front gate of garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th at Lincoln Way. Families welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Cosponsored by Botanical Garden, SF Nature Education, and Golden Gate Audubon.

Butte, Glenn, and Sutter Counties

Saturday, December 1 – Sunday, December 2

Steve Margolin, margolin@maxinet.com

On this two-day trip, we'll look for wintering birds including geese (four species), Tundra Swans, a variety of ducks, raptors, and Sandhill Cranes. Meet on Saturday at 8:30 a.m. in parking lot at Riverbend Park in Oroville. We will walk north on path along Feather River, then pick up any latecomers back at parking lot around 9:30. We'll caravan to another spot in Oroville before heading out through grasslands and rice fields across Central Valley toward Sacramento River. We should be at Llano Seco Unit of Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge around lunchtime. After lunch, we will caravan to other sites, ending at Gray Lodge, west of Gridley. Make sure you have plenty of gas before arriving at meeting spot. On Sunday, meet at 9 a.m. in lot at Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge.

Accommodations are at Blue Gum Willows Motel or Best Western in Willows, Riverside B&B in Oroville, and other motels in Oroville, Willows, or Chico. Both Oroville tribal casinos have hotels, as does Colusa casino. There is no lodge

at Gray Lodge. Bring lunch, snacks, liquids, scopes, and clothes appropriate for northern Sacramento Valley in December (cold, with wind and rain always possible). Heavy rain cancels. Join trip for both days or just one. There is no need to call trip leader to reserve a spot. \$

Drive east on I-80, then take Rt. 99 to Rt. 162 into Oroville, or Rt. 99 to Rt. 70 into Oroville, or I-505 to I-5 to Princeton exit and then east through Butte City and on Rt. 162 into Oroville. Riverbend Park is at Montgomery St. exit off Rt. 70 (turn toward Feather River, which is left if coming from south, and not into town). Park is at west end of Montgomery. Map showing roads in north valley may be helpful. Allow 2.5 to 3 hours driving time from Bay Area. For Sacramento NWR, from I-5, take Princeton exit just north of Glenn Co. line and follow signs to refuge.

San Francisco Botanical Gardens

Sunday, December 2, 8 – 10:30 a.m.

Alan Ridley, allanrid@pacbell.net; Helen McKenna, 415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall, 650.349.3780

Meet at front gate of garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. The garden's micro-habitats attract an array of resident, migrant, and vagrant birds. This monthly trip is oriented toward helping beginning birders develop their skills in spotting and identifying birds.

Jewel Lake in Tilden Regional Park

Berkeley

Friday, December 7, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Phila Rogers, 510.848.9156, philajane6@yahoo.com

Meet at parking lot at north end of Central Park Dr. for a 1-mile stroll through this lush riparian area. Winter at lake, with all the winter visitors, is a special time. The lake level rises with the rains, and winter-visiting waterbirds should have arrived. Be prepared for muddy paths. Heavy rain cancels. Jewel Lake walks continue in 2008 on the first Friday of month.



Entrance fee



Biking trip



Coyote Hills via Alameda Creek and Quarry Lakes

Fremont

Saturday, December 8

Kathy Jarrett, 510.547.1233, kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com

Meet at 9 a.m. on east side of Fremont BART station for this all-day trip; return to BART is at about 3 p.m. From the time we step off train, we'll see birds, which vary according to the season. There are riparian, marsh, and bayside habitats. Total distance is about 24 miles, mostly on paved bike trails, with very little uphill. We'll have a picnic lunch at Coyote Hills visitor center. Bicycle helmet required. Dress in layers. Reservations not necessary but an email or phone call would be appreciated. Rain cancels.

Car: From I-880 to Fremont, take Mowry Ave. exit east toward central Fremont and go 2.3 mi. on Mowry. Fremont BART parking lot is on east side of station past Civic Center Dr.

Transit schedules: www.transitinfo.org. Bay Trail info: <http://baytrail.abag.ca.gov/>. East Bay Regional Park District: www.ebparks.org.

Corona Heights

San Francisco

Friday, December 21, 8 – 10 a.m.

Charles Hibbard; Lewis Ellingham; Brian Fitch; Margaret Goodale, mgoodale@randallmuseum.org, 415.554.9600 ext.16

Meet in front of Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, at end of Museum Way off Roosevelt. We'll enjoy views of the city and bay as we circle Corona Heights, checking the east canyon woodland and north forest for residents and migrants, as well as monitoring the hilltop scrub and south cliff.



Arrowhead Marsh

Oakland

Sunday, December 23

Kathy Jarrett, 510.547.1233, kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com

Meet at Fruitvale BART at 9:30 a.m. or at East Creek Point Trailhead at 9:50 a.m. We'll ride SF Bay Trail from East Creek Point to Damon Marsh and Arrowhead

Marsh for the 10:35 a.m. high tide. Bicycle helmet required. Dress in layers, and bring lunch and liquids. Reservations not necessary but an email or phone call would be appreciated. Rain cancels bicycle trip but not birding trip. In case of rain, meet at Arrowhead Marsh at 10 a.m. Call for message on leader's machine.

Car: Exit I-880 at High St. in Oakland and go southwest to High St. Bridge to Alameda. Cross bridge and turn left onto Fernside and park on street. Bike back over bridge, turn right onto Tidewater Ave., and go .25 mi. to East Creek Point trailhead on right. Lesser St. is just beyond on left. In case of inclement weather: From I-880 in Oakland, exit at Hegenberger Rd. and head west. Turn right onto Doolittle Dr. (Hwy. 61) and right again onto Swan Way, then left into Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline; continue to end of road to parking lot.

Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park

Oakland

Wednesday, December 26,

9:30 a.m. – noon

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066,
hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey,
510.528.2093, ruthtobey@earthlink.net

Join us this Boxing Day at large spherical cage near Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue. We will bird around there, then go up garden path toward Children's Fairyland or walk down lake toward Embarcadero, after which we will cover what we missed. This month the lake should be crowded with winter visitors: Greater and Lesser Scaups, Barrow's and Common Goldeneyes, Horned and Eared Grebes, and many more species that call this spot their winter home.

Take 12, N, or NL bus to Grand and Perkins, and walk into park on Perkins. Best parking at boathouse lot near spherical cage. Entry (via Bellevue near Children's Fairyland) is free on weekdays.

Sweeney Ridge

Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Wednesday, December 26

8:00 am—11:00 am

Eddie Bartley, 415.355.0450,
eddie@naturetrip.com

Discover a very scenic, birdy, coastal scrub wilderness located on SF Peninsula that has changed little from the time when Ohlone tribelets thrived here and Juan Gaspar de Portola and his expedition "discovered" SF Bay in 1769. Trip is in two parts: section one starts at 8 a.m.

Palm Springs, Morongo Valley, and Joshua Tree National Park

Thursday, April 23 – Sunday, April 26, 2008

Leaders: Emilie Strauss; Rusty Scalf, 510.666.9936, rscalf@sonic.net

This extended trip offers excellent opportunities for viewing desert and oasis birds as well as spring migrants. We expect to see Vermillion Flycatcher, Summer Tanager, Yellow-breasted Chat, and many desert species, such as Greater Roadrunner, Black-throated Sparrow, and Verdin. Any storm activity to south may result in a migrant fallout, so we'll keep our schedule flexible. Local birders will be consulted. Trip is limited to 15 people. A \$100 deposit is required. Contact Ruth Tobey, 510.528.2093, ruthtobey@earthlink.net, to reserve space.

Proposed Itinerary:

Thursday, April 23. Fly out of Oakland in early evening, rent two vans at airport, drive to Palm Springs, and stay there overnight.

Friday, April 24. Spend morning birding Palm Canyon, afternoon at Nature Conservancy's Coachella Valley Preserve. Overnight in Yucca Valley.

Saturday, April 25. Bird in Morongo Valley, Covington Park. Big Morongo Canyon might be the finest oasis in California for viewing spring migration.

Sunday, April 26. Bird Joshua Tree National Park. Return to Oakland in early evening. We'll try to get a date shake at Hadley's before departure.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Greater Roadrunner.

and ends at 9 a.m.; section two ends at 11 a.m. First quarter mile of trail on which we'll focus is relatively flat and easy. From there on, for those who'd like to continue, it becomes a moderately strenuous stroll to the ridgeline and Discovery Point. Total distance is about 3 miles roundtrip. Steady rain cancels.

From I-280 in San Bruno take Sneath Lane west all the way to end and park in GGNRA parking lot.

California Condors at Big Sur

Sunday, December 30, 11:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Richard and Linda Kincaid,
condorchick@gmail.com; Pam
Belchamber, pbelchamber@earthlink.net,
510.549.2839

Come to Big Sur to see California Condors! This trip is offered exclusively to Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Members by Hi Mountain Condor Lookout Project. Leaders and participants will caravan to accessible viewing locations, using radio

telemetry to locate condors in the wild. Spotting scopes are provided. A tax-deductible donation of \$50 per person to Hi Mountain will be used exclusively for supporting the Big Sur condor recovery project. Trip is limited to 16 participants and is suitable for all ages and abilities. Deadline for replying is December 20.

Contact Kristen Bunting, GGA office manager, at ggas@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.2222, to reserve a space. After you are confirmed on trip, make check payable to Hi Mountain Condor Lookout Project and mail to Kristen Bunting, Golden Gate Audubon, 2530 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94702. Meet at Big Sur Lodge at 11:30 a.m. Bring binoculars, water, and snacks/lunch, and wear warm, layered clothing.

Take Hwy. 101 south to Hwy. 156 west. Connect to Hwy. 1 south and continue through Monterey/Carmel. Big Sur Lodge is 26 miles south of Carmel in Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. Turn left into park and follow signs to lodge. Allow 3 hours of driving time (150 mi.) each way.

This winter, Golden Gate Audubon is sponsoring four classes at Albany Adult School. Register online at www.albany.k12.ca.us/adult/birding.html or by calling 510.559.6580.

Birding By Ear I

Denise Wight

Wednesdays, January 16 – February 6, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus four Saturday field trips, January 19 – February 9, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Birding by ear in winter is often challenging, but birds continue to vocalize, and some birds are even starting to sing a little. This class will cover birds we might hear and see on a cool winter morning, as well as information on bird sounds. For more information, see the instructor's website, www.blkittiwake.com.

Birding By Ear II

Denise Wight

Wednesdays, February 27 – March 19, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus four Saturday field trips, March 1 – March 22, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

It's time to brush up on spring birdsongs! We will reacquaint ourselves with the early spring singers, as well as some wintering species. For more information, go to www.blkittiwake.com.

Birds of the Bay Area

Rusty Scalf and Bob Lewis

Wednesdays, January 9 – February 13, plus field trips on the Saturday or Sunday following each class, with the last trip being weekend-long

Join an enthusiastic group to see wintering shorebirds and waterfowl, and resident land birds. You'll also learn about bird behavior and ID. The field trips go to destinations around the Bay Area. For more information, go to www.wingbeats.org.

Birds and Butterflies—Easy Garden Enchantment

Corinne Greenberg

Tuesdays, January 15 – February 5, 7 – 9 p.m., plus one field trip on Saturday morning, February 9

Set out a welcome for birds, butterflies, and other beneficial critters, and become captivated by the beauty of native plants as you learn year-round ecological gardening. Gorgeous slide shows, environmental and natural history, and easy garden management lessons will help you create an enchanting wildlife habitat. Materials fee is \$5, payable to instructor. Corinne Greenberg is a landscape designer, certified horticulturalist, and award-winning artist. For more details, go to www.thegardenisateacher.com.

Zen and the Art of Mushroom Hunting at the Oakland Museum

Debbie Viess

Thursday, January 17, 7:30 – 9 p.m., plus one field trip, Saturday, January 19, location to be announced

Golden Gate Audubon's classes at the Oakland Museum of California continue with this class that invites you to discover the world of mushrooms with an experienced and engaging guide.

Debbie is a Bay Area biologist, writer, and artist who has studied and taught about mushrooms for the past 15 years. The workshop consists of an evening slide lecture, including hands-on material, and a day in the field at a premier mushrooming location.

The fee is \$35. Register for the Oakland Museum class by calling the Golden Gate Audubon office at 510.843.2222.

Donations

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation, education, and member activities!

GOLDEN EAGLE (\$1000 AND MORE)

Dolores Butkus, Dr. Marian W. Braumoeller, Nancy Tisdale Clark, Elizabeth & Paul Eisenhardt, Bonnie & Earl Hamlin, John & Valerie Matzger

PEREGRINE FALCON (\$500 TO \$999)

Ron & Susan Briggs, James C. Carmichael, Mara K. Melandry

LEAST TERN (\$200 TO \$499)

Barbara Anderson, Carol Baird & Alan Harper, Frank G. & Janice Delfino, FPL Energy, John H. Kenny, Roy Leggitt & Courtney Clarkson, Helen McKenna Ridley & Allan Ridley, Linda Stevens & John Bowers, Peter Weiner

CLAPPER RAIL (\$100 TO \$199)

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IN HONOR OF

Kevin Consey: Russell & Karen Merritt

GRANTS

California Environmental Protection Agency: Eco-Oakland Education Program

SPECIAL NOTE

Many of the aforementioned donations were given during our 90th Anniversary celebration. We offer many thanks to all of the donors for this event.



October marked a seasonal transition as the wave of fall migrants tailed off and winter visitors returned, particularly ducks and sparrows.

LOONS TO DUCKS

Two pelagic birding trips set sail this month: Oct. 14 to Cordell Bank, MRN (RS), and Oct. 19 to Bodega Cyn., SON (DS). Tubenose highlights from the Oct. 14 trip included 2 Laysan and 155 Black-footed Albatrosses, along with 4 Flesh-footed and 5 Short-tailed Shearwaters. The Oct. 19 trip found an elusive Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel. **PIOWD** Boobies (*Sula leucogaster*) lingered through Oct. at the DENWR Salt Ponds in Alviso (SCL) and at SE Farallon Island (SF).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

Photographs of a **Swallow-tailed Kite** (*Creagrus furcatus*) on Oct. 4 drew birders to Dutton's Vineyards, in the vicinity of Graton and Occidental, SON, but an extensive search the following day failed to relocate the bird (CJ; fide LH). The highlight from the GGRO Hawkwatch at Hawk Hill, MRN, was unequivocally a juvenile **Eurasian Kestrel** (*Falco tinnunculus*), banded on Oct. 23 (MA; fide AF). This may be the first documented appearance of this species in California.

A flyover Sandhill Crane on the 13th at Fort Funston may be the 1st SF record (KMK). A lone Solitary Sandpiper was located on the 4th at Hayward RS, ALA (BR). Pectoral Sandpipers continued at a half-dozen locales through early Oct. A probable **Curlew Sandpiper** (*Calidris ferruginea*) was tentatively ID'd but well described on Oct. 19 at Radio Rd. pond in Redwood Shores, SM (JA). Stilt Sandpipers were noted Oct. 8-15 at Ora Loma Sanitary District, ALA (ADM; BM, BR), and Oct. 10-21 at DENWR in Newark, ALA (JD; mob).

A Sabine's Gull wandered inland as far as Clifton Court Forebay, CC, on the 8th (LH, DW). A seawatch from Pigeon Pt., SM, on the 5th yielded a Common Tern (RT). An unusual tern at Hayward RS, ALA, on the 4th proved to be an Arctic Tern (BR). An



Michael Armer

On October 23 Michael Armer, working with Beth Sturgeon in the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory blind at Hawk Hill in Marin, banded this juvenile Eurasian Kestrel and photographed the bird.

Oct. 26 seawatch from Ocean Blvd in Moss Beach, SM, located an Ancient Murrelet on the water (RT).

DOVES TO THRASHERS

A SM Big Day located a calling Long-eared Owl near Gazos Cr. in the wee hours of Oct. 7 (GH, MB, JR). Common Poorwills moved through in late Oct. with a high count of 8 at Mt. Tamalpais SP, MRN, including 2 hit by a car on the 24th (NF). A straggling Costa's Hummingbird turned up at McNear's Beach, MRN, on the 15th (ADM).

On the 21st, Hawk watchers turned their attention to a Clark's Nutcracker perched in the pines atop Hawk Hill, MRN (EG, HB; fide NW). On the 6th, a Townsend's Solitaire visited a small pond along Mines Rd., SCL (AE, VB). A Sage Thrasher turned up on the 7th at DENWR, ALA (PG). On the

21st, a Red-throated Pipit joined a large flock of American Pipits in a disked field in Gilroy, SCL (SR).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

Observers at SE Farallon Island, SF, were treated to the usual cornucopia of vagrants this season, the highlight being a young male **Golden-crowned Warbler** (*Dendroica graciae*) on the 14th, which would be a 4th record for Northern California (MB). Back on land, the southbound Warbler wave remained strong with 6 Tennessee, 1 Virginia's, 2 Lucy's, 3 Chestnut-sided, 1 Black-throated Blue, 1 Black-throated Green, 1 Prairie, 17 Palm, 3 Blackpoll, and 2 Black-and-white Warblers; 1 American Redstart; 1 Prothonotary Warbler; and 2 Northern Waterthrush.

A wasp-eating Summer Tanager was found on the 18th at Battery Chester, SF (DM). Lapland Longspurs were sighted at a half-dozen locations and a Chestnut-collared Longspur was noted sporadically Oct. 15-29 at "Mt. Trashmore" (Hayward RS), ALA (BR). A Dickcissel was found foraging in a brussels sprout field in Moss Beach, SM, on the 6th (RT, PM, JR). Bobolinks turned up on the 6th and 15th at outer PRNS, MRN (CL, RS).

A 1st year male Yellow-headed Blackbird teed up at Coyote Pt. Golf Course, SM, on the 4th (JD). The same day an Orchard Oriole returned to its winter haunts in the Ft. Mason Community Garden, SF (AH). Finally, a Cassin's Finch was located in a douglas fir forest on Butano Ridge, SM, on the 26th (BMK).

See page 10 for a complete list of bird sightings and observer abbreviations.

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers, "oob" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions. Special thanks to Brent Plater and Janet Collins for assistance in compiling data.

Abbreviations for Observers: ADM, Al DeMartini; AE, Art Edwards; AF, Allen Fish; AH, Alan Hopkins; BB, Bill Bousman; BM, Bruce Mast; BMK, Bert McKee; BR, Bob Richmond; CJ, Carolyn Johnson; CL, Cindy Lieurance; DM, Dominik Mosur; DS, Debra Shearwater; DW, Denise Wight; EB, Eleanor Briccetti; EG, Eli Gross; GH, Garth Harwood; HB, Herb Brant; JA, Jim Armstrong; JD, Joe Devine; JR, Jennifer Rycenga; KMK, Kevin McKereghan; LH, Lisa Hug; MA, Michael Armer; MB, Matt Brady; MB, Michelle Brodie; NF, Neill Fogarty; NW, Nick Whelan; PG, Phil Gordon; PM, Peggy Macres; RS, Rich Stallcup; RT, Ron Thorn; SR, Steve Rottenborn; VB, Vern Bothwell

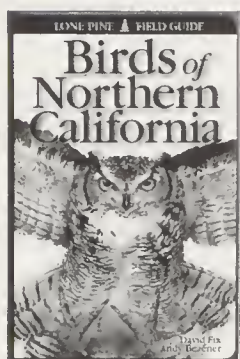
Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; CCFS, Coyote Creek Field Station; CP, County Park, Cr., Creek; Cyn., Canyon; DENWR, Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge; EEC, Environmental Education Center; FOS, first of season; GGP, Golden Gate Park; L., Lake; MRN, Marin; Mt., Mount; N., North; NAP, Napa; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; OSP, Open Space Preserve; PRBO, Pt Reyes Bird Observatory; PRNS, Pt Reyes National Seashore; Pt., Point; Rd., Road; Res., Reservoir; RP, Regional Park; RS, Regional Shoreline; S., South; SB, State Beach; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SFBBO, SF Bay Bird Observatory; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve; WPCP, Water Pollution Control Plant

Holiday Gifts at the Nature Store

Golden Gate Audubon's Nature Store carries an array of reasonably priced gifts for all ages and all levels of birders. You can visit the store, located at the GGA office. Or, if you are attending the dinner after the Oakland Christmas Bird Count on December 16 or the San Francisco count on December 27, look for a table displaying Nature Store merchandise. We'll have a wide selection of 2008 wall calendars and datebooks, coloring books and other fun items for children, T-shirts and tote bags, and mug and shade-grown coffee gift sets.

Remember—if you are a GGA Supporting Member, you receive a 10 percent discount on all merchandise. And if you don't find the right item, a GGA membership might be the perfect gift (see coupon on page 12). Whether you make a purchase at the Nature Store or give a membership, the proceeds directly fund Golden Gate Audubon's programs and conservation work.

Here are just three of the new items at the store.



Birds of Northern California

This book by David Fix and Andy Bezener has more than 300 well-written species accounts, each on its own page, with sizable color renderings, range maps, and detailed information on identification and behavior. The geographically targeted guide, light enough to carry in the field, is especially valuable for beginning birders.

The Laws Field Guide to the Sierra Nevada

John Muir Laws's passion for the Sierra Nevada infuses his 2,710 species descriptions and stunning watercolors. The more than 1,700 species illustrated cover not only birds but mammals, insects, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and plants. This comprehensive guide is smaller than nine inches high and five inches wide, making it indispensable for a day hike or a backpacking trip into the wilderness.

Hummingbirds: How Many Hummingbirds Can You Find?

If weather or other circumstances keep you indoors, gather friends and family to work on a 1,000-piece bird puzzle. Each puzzle, whether depicting hummingbirds, backyard birds, or shorebirds, incorporates dozens of birds in a colorful, intricate design.



Last Chance to Sign Up for the Christmas Bird Count

If you respond quickly, you may still be able to participate in one of Golden Gate Audubon's two Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs). Organizers are assembling teams of birders of all levels of ability for the Oakland count on Sunday, December 16, and the San Francisco Count on Thursday, December 27.

The deadline for joining the Oakland CBC is November 26, and the December 6 deadline for the San Francisco CBC is also fast approaching. The quickest way to sign up for the count and dinner afterward is on our website (www.goldengateaudubon.org). For additional details, contact Dave Quady at 510.704.9353 or Bob Lewis at 510.845.5001 for the Oakland count or Alan Hopkins at 415.664.0983 for the San Francisco count. For information on the dinner, call the Golden Gate Audubon office at 510.843.2222.

A Message from Our Treasurer

Golden Gate Audubon owes its financial success and thus its overall success to the continued generosity of its members. This is clearly evident when looking at the financial statements on the facing page.

For the years ended June 30, 2007 and 2006, Golden Gate Audubon received \$219,642 and \$148,761, respectively, in gifts and donations and an additional \$100,302 and \$69,620, respectively, in membership dues. This public support not only funded member services and administration but went to conservation and education programs. Golden Gate Audubon could not sustain its programs and activities without your membership dues, volunteer efforts, and generosity. For the year ended June 30, 2007, Golden Gate Audubon's net assets increased \$159,535, largely due to a bequest of \$84,761, the recovery of attorney's fees related to our efforts to reduce bird mortality at Altamont Pass, and investment earnings.

Golden Gate Audubon has accumulated \$948,058 in net assets since its inception 90 years ago, of which \$176,629 is restricted for future program services. We follow good budgeting practices to sustain important ongoing programs and to initiate new ones. Our accumulated net assets help us cover unanticipated costs when important conservation issues suddenly emerge.

For the year ended June 30, 2007, 56 percent of expenditures were for educational programs and conservation and another 25 percent for member services, including publication of *The Gull*. Only 19 percent of expenditures were for management, general, and fundraising expenses.

We thank you for helping us remain a leading wildlife conservation organization in the Bay Area and look forward to building on our accomplishments.

by Al Peters, Treasurer

Golden Gate Audubon Statement of Activities

YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2007 AND 2006

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	2007 Combined Total	2006 Combined Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUE					
Public Support					
Direct Contributions					
Gifts and Donations	\$ 219,642	\$ 18,415	\$0	\$ 238,057	\$ 148,761
Grants	0	220,122	0	220,122	193,746
Total Direct Contributions	219,642	238,537	0	458,179	342,507
Indirect Contributions					
Earth Share	4,097	0	0	4,097	3,037
Total Public Support	223,739	238,537	0	462,276	345,544
REVENUE					
Membership Dues	100,302	0	0	100,302	69,620
Investment Earnings, Net	113,243	0	0	113,243	68,234
Merchandise Sales					
(Net of Direct Expenses \$6,539 in 2007 and \$7,059 in 2006)	533	0	0	533	1,900
Lawsuit Settlement Proceeds	92,140	0	0	92,140	0
Other	0	0	0	0	1,968
Total Revenue	306,218	0	0	306,218	141,722
Total Public Support and Revenue	529,957	238,537	0	768,494	487,266
Net Assets Released from Restriction	252,932	(252,932)	0	0	0
FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES					
Program Services					
Conservation	133,680	0	0	133,680	212,767
Educational Programs	210,145	0	0	210,145	127,339
Member Services	150,183	0	0	150,183	89,984
Management and General	59,259	0	0	59,259	65,291
Fundraising	55,692	0	0	55,692	40,901
Total Expenses	608,959	0	0	608,959	536,282
Change in Net Assets	173,930	(14,395)	0	159,535	(49 016)
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	597,499	135,800	55,224	788,523	837,539
Net Assets at End of Year	\$ 771,429	\$ 121,405	\$ 55,224	\$ 948,058	\$ 788 523

Complete audited financial statements are available upon request from the Golden Gate Audubon office.

Member Nominations to the Board of Directors

In 2008, two seats will be open for new elected directors. According to the Golden Gate Audubon bylaws, petitions for board candidates must be submitted to the Golden Gate Audubon office at least 12 weeks prior to the election, which

will take place in mid-May 2008. This means that the deadline for submitting candidate petitions is mid-February. A specific date and guidelines for submitting nominating petitions will appear in the January/February *Gull*.

Give a Gift that Helps Local Wildlife

This holiday season, present your nature-loving friends and family members with a Supporting Membership in Golden Gate Audubon—a gift they will enjoy the whole year. Fill out the form below and return it to our office, or order a gift membership by calling 510.843.2222. If the recipient is already a member, consider making a donation in his or her name. You can also sign up for a Supporting Membership or give a donation by going to our website: www.goldengateaudubon.org.

PLEASE SELECT A MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

- ☐ Individual \$25
- ☐ Family \$40
- ☐ I would like to include a donation to support GGA's conservation, education, and birding programs.

Gift Membership \$ _____

Additional Donation \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Your contributions to Golden Gate Audubon are fully tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

GIFT RECIPIENT

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

PHONE (H) / PHONE (W) _____

EMAIL _____

YOUR INFORMATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

PHONE (H) / PHONE (W) _____

EMAIL _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION

- ☐ My check, payable to **Golden Gate Audubon Society**, is enclosed.
- ☐ Please charge my credit card: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

CARD NUMBER _____ EXPIRATION (MM / YY) _____

NAME AS IT APPEARS ON CARD _____ SIGNATURE _____

☐ Please do not share these names with any other organization.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The Gull is the newsletter of the Golden Gate Audubon Society. As a Supporting Member of Golden Gate Audubon, you receive a subscription to *The Gull*, a 10 percent discount on items purchased at our Nature Store, and the satisfaction of supporting local conservation efforts. Local members of the National Audubon Society are encouraged to join Golden Gate Audubon directly. Contact our office at 510.843.2222 for details.

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